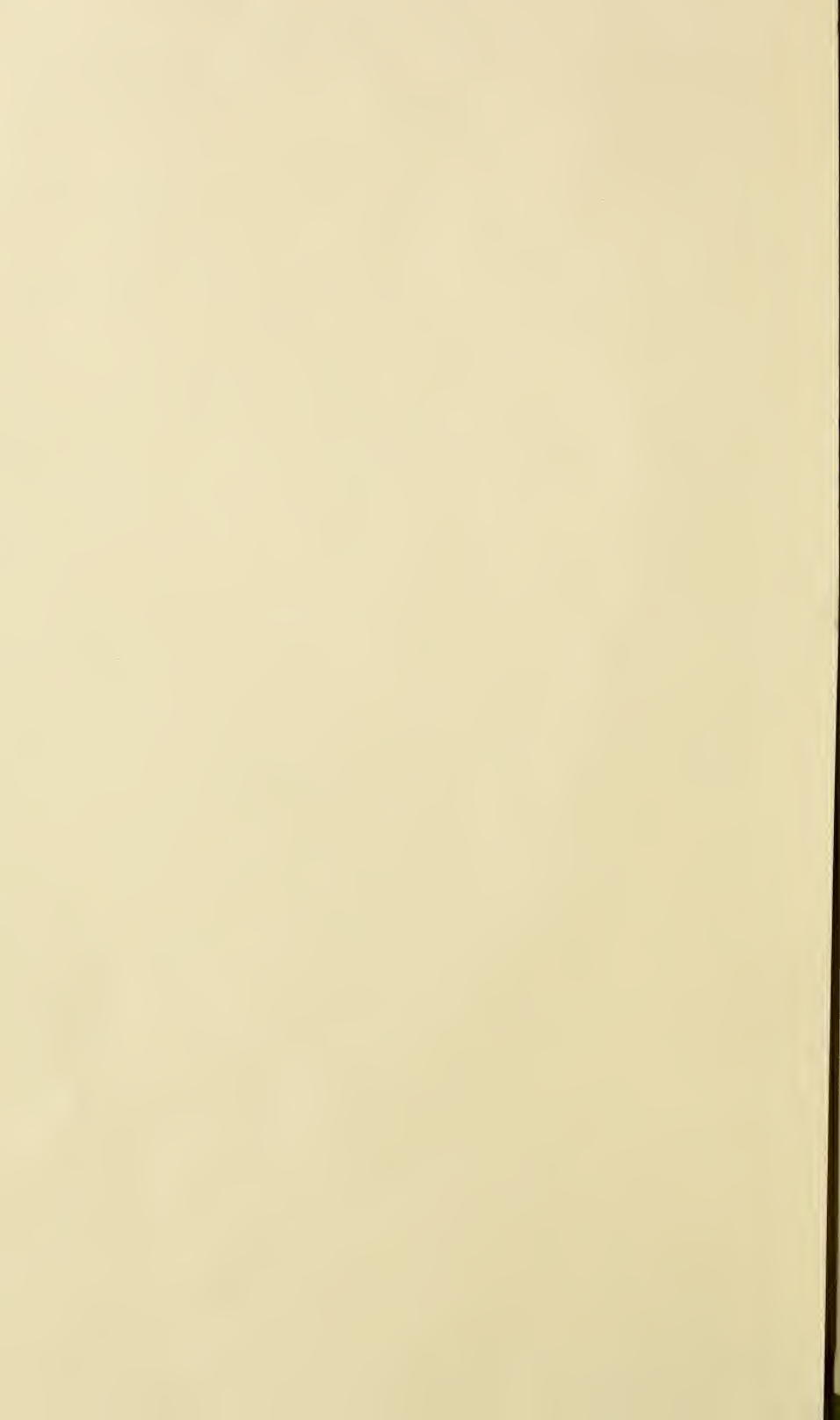


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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

DIVISION OF STATISTICS.

OFFICE OF THE STATISTICIAN,

Washington, D. C., April 15, 1897.

The accompanying preliminary report upon the cotton crop of 1896-97 is herewith respectfully submitted. The invaluable services of all who have furnished necessary information, particularly the officials of railway and water transportation companies and of cotton and woolen mills, and the township and precinct correspondents of the Department, are gratefully acknowledged.

HENRY A. ROBINSON, *Statistician.*

Hon. JAMES WILSON,

Secretary of Agriculture.

THE COTTON CROP OF 1896.

The statements furnished the Department of Agriculture by all the railway and water transportation companies show that from September 1, 1896, to February 1, 1897, the total actual movement of cotton from the States of production to ports, Northern and Western mills, Canada, Mexico, and all other destinations, amounted to 6,517,126 commercial bales. Reports from the officials of all but five of the Southern mills show actual purchases taken from the current crop of 560,114 bales. The five mills not heard from purchased during the same period last year 2,413 bales. The Department's township and precinct agents show that on February 1, 1897, there remained on plantations 362,268 bales; in warehouses, 598,727; at public gins, 161,569; at compresses, 241,344; and at depots and yards, 130,421, making the total amount held on plantations and in interior towns, not including any cotton held at ports, 1,494,329 bales.

The crop, by States and Territories, is estimated as follows:

Cotton crop, 1896.

States and Territories.	Railway and water movement from Sept. 1, 1896, to Feb. 1, 1897.	Remaining on plantations and in interior towns Feb. 1, 1897.	Bought by mills from Sept. 1, 1896, to Feb. 1, 1897.	Total crop. ¹
	<i>Bales.</i>	<i>Bales.</i>	<i>Bales.</i>	<i>Bales.</i>
Alabama	611, 707	157, 729	43, 975	813, 411
Arkansas	481, 783	129, 637	445	611, 865
Florida	43, 445	8, 343	.....	51, 788
Georgia	924, 639	177, 583	134, 101	1, 236, 323
Indian Territory	68, 800	14, 463	.....	83, 263
Kentucky	358	.....	.....	358
Louisiana	489, 711	107, 766	.....	597, 477
Mississippi	972, 664	198, 397	8, 928	1, 179, 989
Missouri	21, 925	1, 641	.....	23, 566
North Carolina	273, 714	38, 046	111, 759	423, 519
Oklahoma	33, 303	1, 102	.....	34, 405
South Carolina	593, 493	59, 581	202, 213	855, 287
Tennessee	168, 009	54, 567	16, 105	238, 681
Texas	1, 823, 140	544, 615	1, 972	2, 369, 727
Virginia	10, 435	859	.....	11, 294
Total	6, 517, 126	1, 494, 329	519, 498	8, 530, 953

¹Including amount remaining on hand September 1.

To the above mill figures should be added, in order to arrive at the total purchases of mills, for Georgia 619, North Carolina 571, and Texas 2,727 bales, taken by the mills of those States from ports and counted in the railway movement. The Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, and Virginia mill figures are also included in the railway movement and port deliveries.

The following table shows the total number of mills in each State that use raw cotton, the number in operation and those not in operation, and revised figures showing the purchases of mills in each State, from September 1, 1896, to February 1, 1897, as compared with the same period 1895-96. The increase from 354 mills in operation last year to 377 the present season is not due altogether to the operation of new mills, but partly to the counting this season of two or more mill plants when operated by the same company. A careful investigation is being made to show the number of spindles in operation this season as compared with the last, which will be set forth in the final report at the close of the year.

Comparative mill purchases, etc., for five months, 1895-96 and 1896-97.

States.	In operation.	Not in operation.	Total.	1895-96.	1896-97.	Per cent increase.	Per cent decrease.
				<i>Bales.</i>	<i>Bales.</i>		
Alabama	28	4	32	44, 575	43, 975	.....	1.3
Arkansas	2	2	4	1, 570	445	.....	71.7
Georgia	71	5	76	139, 991	134, 720	.....	3.8
Kentucky	9	1	10	10, 415	11, 142	.....	.....
Louisiana	2	2	4	7, 439	5, 917	.....	2
Mississippi	7	1	8	11, 664	8, 928	.....	2.3
Missouri	2	1	3	530	1, 384	.....	.....
North Carolina	141	4	145	130, 759	112, 330	.....	14.1
South Carolina	69	2	71	213, 187	202, 960	.....	4.8
Tennessee	26	8	34	16, 731	16, 105	.....	3.7
Texas	8	2	8	5, 751	4, 699	.....	18.3
Virginia	14	1	15	16, 084	17, 509	.....	8.9
Total	377	33	410	598, 696	560, 114	.....	6.4

No deduction has been made of the amount of cotton remaining on plantations and at interior points September 1, 1896. The above figures are subject to revision in the Department's final estimate of the crop to be issued after the close of the commercial year, August 31, 1897.

In illustration of the method of arriving at the movement from each State across its boundaries to ports, mills, etc., the figures in detail for the State of Arkansas may be instructive. These figures are based upon statements received from every railroad handling cotton in that State, from the Department's special agents at Memphis, New Orleans, and St. Louis, showing the receipts by river at those points, and from local agents at Fort Smith, Van Buren, and Texarkana, showing the wagon receipts at those points from Indian Territory, Oklahoma, and Texas.

Arkansas crop, 1896.

	Bales.
Forwarded by rail and water to St. Louis	215, 630
Forwarded by rail and water to Memphis	136, 071
Forwarded by rail and water to New Orleans	82, 232
Forwarded by rail to New England mills	41, 961
Forwarded by rail to Ohio River points	6, 326
Forwarded by rail to Shreveport	4, 621
Forwarded by rail to Atlantic ports	3, 612
Forwarded by rail to Bayou Sara, La.	505
Forwarded by rail to Pensacola, Fla.	100
Forwarded by rail to Missouri points	20
Total movement	491, 078
Less rail and wagon deliveries from Indian Territory at Fort Smith ..	6, 131
Less wagon deliveries from Indian Territory at Vanburen	300
Less rail deliveries from Oklahoma at Fort Smith	1, 250
Less rail deliveries from Mississippi at Helena	393
Less rail and wagon deliveries from Texas at Texarkana	1, 218
	9, 295
Net movement from Arkansas, as in table above	481, 783

The following detailed statement of the movement from the State of Louisiana is instructive in that it shows the delivery, by rail and wagon, of a large amount of cotton from Texas plantations at Shreveport, which, unless deducted from the total Louisiana movement, would be erroneously counted as the product of that State. Several thousand bales delivered by rail and wagon at Logansport from Texas plantations to local factors at Logansport have also been properly deducted from the Louisiana movement.

Louisiana crop, 1896.

	Bales.
Forwarded by rail and water to New Orleans	442, 216
Forwarded by rail to New England	40, 052
Forwarded by rail to Natchez, Miss	14, 341
Forwarded by rail to Galveston	12, 113
Forwarded by rail and water to Memphis	9, 263
Forwarded by rail and water to St. Louis	8, 497
Forwarded by rail to Vicksburg	6, 410

Louisiana crop, 1896—Continued.

	Bales.
Forwarded by rail to Houston.....	1,701
Forwarded by rail to Atlantic ports	300
Total movement.....	534,893
Less rail deliveries from Arkansas at Shreveport.....	4,621
Less rail deliveries from Arkansas at Bayou Sara.....	505
Less rail deliveries from Mississippi at Bayou Sara.....	2,234
Less rail deliveries from Mississippi at Baton Rouge	3,003
Less rail and wagon deliveries from Texas at Logansport.....	2,609
Less rail and wagon deliveries from Texas at Shreveport.....	32,210
	<hr/> 45,182
Net movement from Louisiana.....	489,711

Among the changes in the past few years in the export movement of cotton, those that have taken place at points on the Pacific Coast and at Pensacola are most worthy of notice. The exports from San Francisco to Japan for the first five months of the season 1895-96 were 20,640 bales, against 25,257 the same period of the present season. The exports from Puget Sound to Japan for the same months in 1895-96 were 2,000 bales, against 13,090 in 1896-97, 5,850 of which passed through Tacoma and 7,240 through Seattle. This shows an increase in the exports to Japan of 25,707 bales in the first five months of the present season. All of this cotton is reported as having been forwarded from interior Texas points.

The export movement from Pensacola has increased from 17,910 bales during the entire season of 1895-96—in which year the movement first began—to 54,225 bales during the first five months of the present season, 48,239 of which were forwarded from interior Alabama points (47,389 to Liverpool and 850 to Mexico), 4,930 to Mexico from New Orleans, and the remainder from Mobile, Memphis, and Arkansas points.